

THE TWO BILLS!

A Political Poem:

WITH

WELL-MEANT EFFUSIONS
ON MISCHIEVOUS DELUSIONS;
AN ADDRESS, SHORT AND HEARTY,
TO THE HEADS OF EACH PARTY.



By E. EYRE, Esq.

Second Edition.

BATH:

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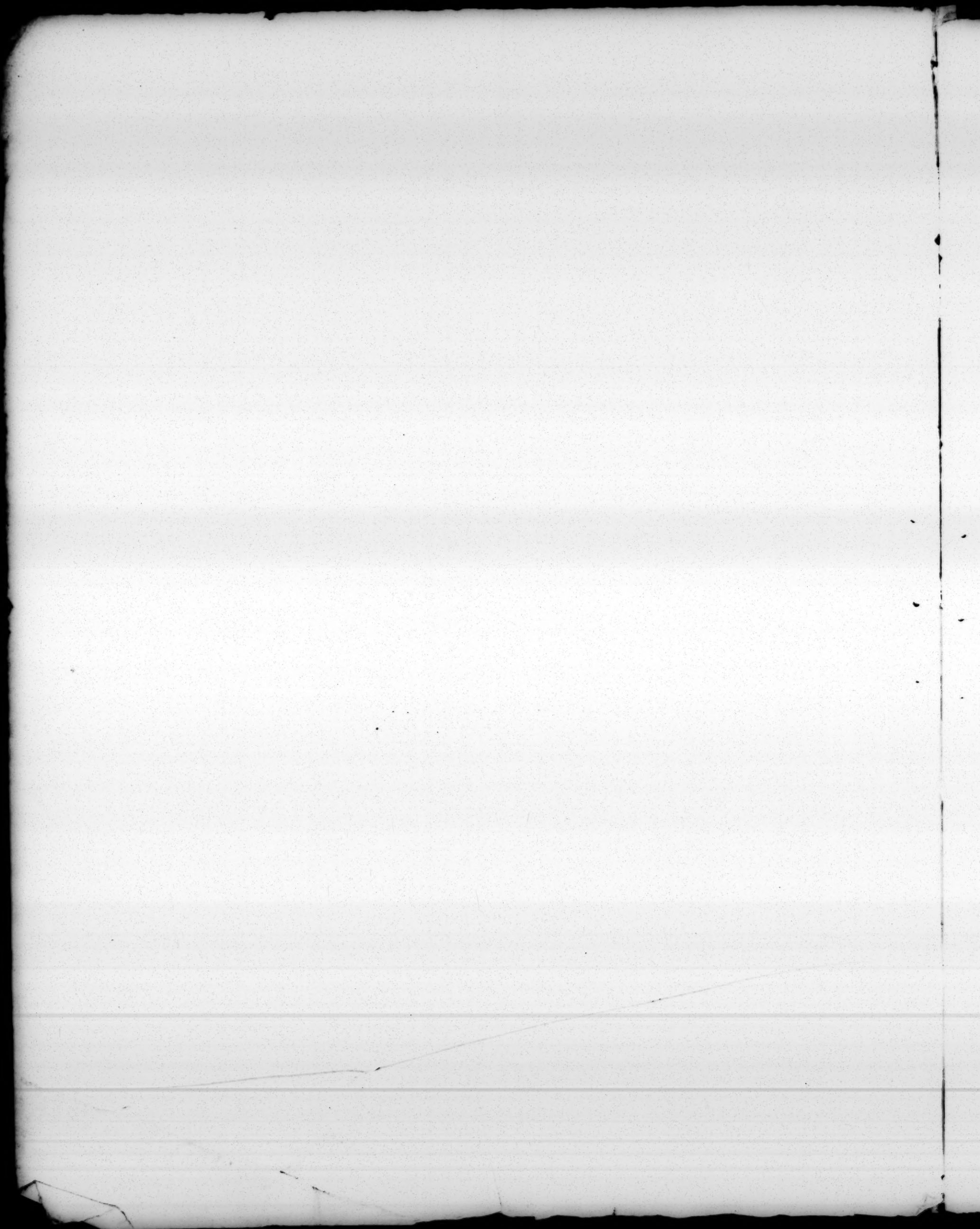
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TO THE PUBLIC.

YE grave and ye merry, ye wise and ye simple,
Whose brows have a frown, or whose cheeks have a dimple,
Have mercy on this little *Child of my Brain*,
Be indulgent, protect it, nor causeless complain;
Consider how few, unless CRITICS they bribe,
Succeed, of the hungry poetical tribe,
Unless to his works some great patrons subscribe: }
Yet the PUBLIC is ever disposed to be kind
To those whose intentions appear well inclin'd;
To its candour my cause I with confidence trust,
Convinc'd I shall gain it, if they think it is just.

PREFACE.

THE following *Jeu d'Esprit* having been approved by a friend, whose taste and judgment are generally esteemed; the desire of contributing towards the amusement of some private friends, superior to any other motive, has induced me to have a few copies printed off; I therefore flatter myself the CRITICS will not be too severe in their strictures, should there be any inaccuracies in a trifle not originally intended for publication; and which having been composed with *great rapidity*, as all subjects *merely of the day* must be, has consequently a claim to *greater* indulgence than those of a more *studied* nature.

Most British subjects by their peers are try'd;
Shall Authors be this privilege deny'd?
The merest trash too oft is highly priz'd,
If by some tonish fool once patronis'd,
Whilst useful truths are turn'd to ridicule,
By each vain sapsull, and hot party tool.
Few Prophets in their country such are deem'd,
Most Poets, till they are dead, not much esteem'd:
From envy some, from ignorance others, blame,
Or stamp with ridicule their honest aim;
For snarling CRITICS feel supreme delight
In finding fault—however wrong or right.

THE ARGUMENT.

A SUBJECT, which alarms and rouses
The active spirits of both Houses,
Whose members make a noise and clatter,
And strive each other to bespatter.
The Outs pretending PITT's two Bills,
Are most confounded bitter pills;
That, sure as Old Nick is in London,
Should they once pass, we must be undone :
Whilst those who hold the reins pretend,
They're meant good subjects to defend,
'Gainst a vile set of innovators,
Who'd soon prove public depredators;
Think their opposers are to blame,
At needful measures to exclaim,
That to promote Counter-Petitions,
Is the sure way to raise seditions ;
Say the new Bills are only meant,
These threat'ning mischiefs to prevent.
That when a fence becomes too weak,
'Tis prudent some new prop to seek
The guileful fox to keep away,
Who'd on our fattest poultry prey.
Of the two parties, which is right,
A little time must bring to light.
Here, gentle Reader, ends my PROEM,
Now, if you've leisure, read the POEM.



THE BILLS.

WITH PUREST ZEAL, WHO LIST IN VIRTUE'S CAUSE,
NEGLECTED, ENVY'D, SELDOM MEET APPLAUSE;
IN EACH VAIN, THOUGHTLESS, AND LUXURIOUS AGE,
FEW USEFUL TRUTHS THE PUBLIC MIND ENGAGE:
WISE LAWS, RELIGION, MORALS, BEST SECURE
EACH STATE FROM DANGER, AND ITS PEACE INSURE.

BILLY PITT, like the man with his ass in the fable,
Tho' he strives to please all, finds himself quite unable;
Since those, in its first state, who rail'd at his bill,
Now it's made less severe, disapprove of it still.
Those grumblers, party leaders, retain in their pay,
Pretend its best parts are all fritter'd away;
Whilst the flaming hot Patriots unite to a man,
To get it thrown out, (if they possibly can);
Persuaded, if once the state helm they can seize,
Henceforth uncontroul'd, they might act as they please;
For all, but mere fools, must perceive their sole wish is,
To plunder, and share the state loaves and gold fishes;
And those who'd persuade us its eggs are grown addle,
Try, by fair means or foul, to leap into its saddle.

Hence proceeds this loud outcry for speedy reform,
In hopes to get rich from the wrecks of the storm;

For

For spendthrifts and gamblers, who hate honest labour,
 Would fain seize the purse of each friend, or rich neighbour,
 And those who have nothing to lose of their own,
 When from vice and excesses once desperate grown,
 The laws, howe'er just, are inclin'd to disown;
 The public to plunder, excite revolutions,
 Exclaim at the wisest and best Constitutions :
 'Tis such, and such only, most ripe for sedition,
 Who'd e'er, set their hands to a counter-petition;
 And those, who thus openly shew their disgust,
 Are the strongest of proofs, that these measures are just;
 To mount fortune's ladder, would make us mere tools,
 Its summit once gain'd, they'd soon treat us like fools :
 Tho' ingratitude's deem'd of all crimes the most hateful,
 The proud and ambitious are ever ungrateful.

Should we to such sharks each high office confide,
 As pay no just debts, all sound morals deride;
 Had they once in trust our estates, goods, or money,
 Without mercy they'd soon rob the hive of its honey;
 With *such patriots*, would PITT form a *new coalition*,
 We should soon find ourselves in a *charming* condition.

Reflect on this truth, and consider it well,
 Who purchase ye, think they've a just right to sell;
 Like Esau, ne'er yield up your rights for a bribe,
 For such are the meanest of all the mean tribe :
 Who part with their freedom, for pleasure or gain,
 Deserve little pity, when most they complain;
 Rest assur'd, those who use every art to cajole you,
 Mean ere long with a strong iron rod to controul you.

Before ye inlist yourselves under strange banners,
 Know well your new leaders' lives, morals, and manners ;
 Who in private stations have prov'd themselves just ;
 These, these are the members, ye safest may trust.
 Say, what man of sense would place confidence long,
 In those who blame all things, when right or when wrong ?
 Can such be impartial or justly inclin'd,
 Who ambition, self-int'rest, and prejudice blind ?
 Hence, when the best plans from some accident fail,
 Like fiends broke from Hell, they at Government rail :
 If success crown its measures, again they advance,
 It proceeds not from wisdom, but a mere lucky chance.
In all cases, the same kind of language pursue,
 And to Ministers cry, no just praise can be due.
 If matters of weight call for cool deliberation,
 Exclaim, they're asleep, and unfit for their station ;
 Again, should some enterprize need quick dispatch,
 To retard it, new schemes soon endeavour to hatch ;
 When supplies are found needful to pay off arrears,
 At such strange waste of treasure shed *crocodile tears* ;
 Pretend they're to fatten hungry locusts and drones,
 Who'd squeeze the *best marrow* from out of our bones ;
 That, 'tis shameful to give away *sinecure-pensions*
 To indolent tools, who have no just pretensions.
 Should corn become dear, from an inclement season,
 Because not *omnipotent* complain without reason,
 And fain 'gainst the state, would accuse them of treason ;
 Yet, spite of these censures, they'd gladly partake,
 Without scruple, a part of this tempting court-cake ;

Toss[those snarlers a sop, and they soon cringe and fawn,
Like divines for *fat livings*, the Mitre and Lawn.
Thus, to prove for their country how warmly they feel,
By factious debates, they interrupt the state wheel ;
In praise of true freedom their rhetoric employ,
Yet its strongest foundations would sap and destroy ;
With tedious vain speeches attempt to amuse us,
In hopes to cajole, to inflame, or confuse us.

Tho' Eloquence surely's the gift of kind heaven,
To mankind for good ends was undoubtedly given,
Yet when by the ambitious and worthless employ'd,
She has oft times most flourishing empires destroy'd.
A truth long since prov'd by old Greece and proud Rome,
As lately by France, a state much nearer home ;
From whose sad misfortunes may we take instruction,
Lest, like them, we rush headlong to certain destruction.
By others distress, those too proud to be taught,
In the same trap most richly deserve to be caught ;
When such dangers alarm, 'tis a species of crime,
In vain declamation to lose so much time.
Whose views are unjust, or whose judgments are weak,
By round-about methods, each subterfuge seek ;
To a *limited time* were orations confin'd,
Much advantage the senate and nation would find ;
Since matters most weighty are too oft set aside,
Of some *popular member* to humour the pride.

When anarchy threatens how needful *strong measures*,
To secure us our freedom, lives, fortunes, and treasures ;
As morals and manners grow worse in bad times,
New laws must be made to punish new crimes ;

Without

THE BILLS.

Without legal measures, by way of prevention,
We should have, (as in France,) a tyrannic Convention :
Then to PITT, bold DUNDAS, and their friends, would be given,
(Ready-sign'd) *a short passport* to send 'em to heaven ;
For who can e'er doubt, the best sheep of the flock,
Would, by a mock trial, be brought to the block.

Unless these *field meetings* and *clubs* are prevented,
We shall have *bitter cause* to grow all discontented :
In their *tribunes*, of Kings, Lords, and Commons complain,
And Thelwall inculcates the doctrines of Paine ;
Would treat all our Clergy, the Peers, King and Queen,
With that new-fangl'd tool, a sharp-edg'd *guillotine*,
And whilst thus assembled, the rankest of treason
Is esteem'd a choice dish, that is ne'er out of season ;
Hence this outcry, that Ministers aim at a blow,
Our rights and franchisements at once to o'erthrow ;
That this bill is most certainly meant to enslave us,
Tho' all honest men see 'tis needful to save us ;
That if PITT stands but firm, as he did heretofore,
Since he rescu'd us once, he may save us *encore*.
Who in routs, crowds, or speeches licentious delight,
'Tis they at these bills loudest vent their keen spite,
No peaceable subject has cause to complain,
Since the vicious alone it was meant to restrain ;
And keep all those quiet who caper and prance,
In hopes soon to join in the *Devil's new dance*,
With their *sans-culottes* friends and adherents in France. }

For our own sakes, since Government must be maintain'd,
In groundless abuse no advantage is gain'd :

Of the present quite heedless, unwarn'd by the past,
 Were Ministers *clearly* to drive on too fast,
 To blame 'em I'd certainly not be the last.

Among the sore evils, which call for redress,
 Are the mischiefs that flow from th' abuse of the press,
 When those of high rank, in degenerate times,
 On each false report are accus'd of foul crimes ;
 Thus, of all human kind, oft the wisest and best,
 From envy are hated, and scoff'd by the rest.
 The maxim now taught in democratical schools,
 Is, that those of high rank are all knaves and mere fools ;
 With such, the most virtuous of Rulers and Kings
 Are deem'd bloody tyrants, *expensive* vain things.
 When peace is proclaim'd, it must needs be a bad one—
 Should war be continued, 'tis unjust and a sad one.
 'Gainst each public measure with clamour loud cry,
 For what is more fickle than *Vox Populi*.

How oft do our streets, houses, theatres ring,
 With that loyal song, GOD SAVE GEORGE OUR GOOD KING !
 Then Fox the *best man of the people* is call'd ;
 Next, like *Guy*, he is burnt, and his character mawl'd.
 The toy those to-day most adore and admire,
 Is soon thrown aside, or cast into the fire.
 Detraction on merit deals out its abuse,
 Whilst honest true satyr's of general use ;
 Its views are all upright, most friendly and pure,
 When deepest it probes, 'tis the vicious to cure ;
 If just the foundation of praise or of blame,
 An honest fair Critic signs *boldly his name* ;

Nor

Nor like base assassins, aims strokes in the dark,
As at night snarling curs are heard loudest to bark.
Hence *libels* are daily stuck up in the street,
Shameful *hand-bills* too forc'd on all strangers they meet,
To make the weak-minded still more discontented,
(A mischief which doubtless should soon be prevented,)
And poison the minds of all the low classes,
Or excite 'em, with tumult, to rise in *large masses*.

O shield us, kind Heaven, from this inquisition!
Lest it soon should adopt that new mode, requisition;
May every true Briton unite to a man,
To stop the mad schemes of this desperate clan;
Like a plague, the strange phrenzy has got to such head,
If not cur'd, its effects all good subjects must dread.
May those of each party, with firm resolution,
Preserve, still unalter'd, our bless'd Constitution,
Nor permit greedy sharks, who pretend to refine it,
On specious pretences, thus dare undermine it.
Tho' quack-politicians persuade us, they're sure,
Of a speedy, most certain, and radical cure,
Trust not their vain boasted experience or skill,
Injudiciously tim'd, the best med'cines oft kill.
Be warn'd, and reflect, was mob law to take place,
Of our freedom we soon should perceive not a trace;
Sure of all the fell tyrants, the most to be dreaded
Is that cruel monster, yclep'd many headed.
Who in public commotions thus warmly engage,
Are the first that fall victims to popular rage:
From ambition, those who in the cause seem most hearty,
Ere long prove the dupes, e'en to those of their party;

A truth,

A truth, that most striking to all must appear,
 As witness *Egalité*, *Marat*, *Robespierre*;
 Besides of the *Jacobine Crew* numbers more,
 Who of their sad crimes have great cause to deplore.
 Ye hot-headed patriots, who loudly thus rail,
 Take heed, lest too late, ye your folly bewail;
 Be warn'd, nor from pique in foul waters thus dabble,
 'Tis dangerous, most dang'rous, to rouse the mad rabble.
 With caution reflect on the dangers you run,
 The *main spring* once broke, the machine is undone;
 In one fatal moment has oft been destroy'd,
 What to bring to perfection whole ages employ'd.
 Sure those are most stupid of all silly fools,
 Who, without one good reason, thus play with edg'd tools;
 Unless you're all bit with a strong inclination
 To try the effect of a long *emigration*.

Should with us, as in France, *equalizing* take place,
 Soon the wealthy and titl'd must fall in disgrace,
 And ye'd wish ye'd ne'er try'd the fraternal embrace. }
 Should with us, as late there, this wild system begin,
 With your rich brother peers you'd be caught in a gin;
 For that curs'd word *equality*'s fraught with seduction,
 And threatens all Europe with speedy destruction;
 Thus, the fatal effects of one single *cant-word*,
 Oft prove more mischievous than musket or sword.

The tragedy acted in *Charles the First's* reign,
 I fear some would wish to see acted again;
 Those turbulent spirits no laws can controul,
 Tho' they aim but at part, wou'd soon o'er-set the whole.

From

From the man with his sons and the rod, warning take,
Which, when grasp'd altogether, no force could e'er break,
But the twigs once divided, and separte seized,
Were bent and destroy'd, by who ever it pleas'd.

Whilst Kings, Lords, and Commons are firmly united,
With such strange innovations we need not be frighted ;
Should factious ambition their joint int'rest divide,
Towards anarchy, doubtless, 'twould be the first stride ;
Yet to such gloomy prospects 'twere madness to yield,
When for more flatt'ring hopes, we've so ample a field.

Reforms, howe'er specious at first they may seem,
If rashly adopted, with mischief must teem ;
The best state physician can never be sure,
Be his skill e'er so great, of perfecting a cure ;
Hence the wise, still with patience, bear ills when but small,
Nor by desperate schemes, risk the loss of *their all*.

In the eye of cool reason, can such e'er prove good,
When inforc'd thro' large streams of the best human blood ?
If once fairly try'd by truth's certain test,
They're a mere change of tyranny found at the best.
Nothing less, I much fear, than an Almighty Scourge,
A state, long corrupt, of its vices can purge ;
Such the power bad habits obtain o'er the soul,
We spurn at good order, and hate just controul,
Ambition, party-factions, self-interest blind,
The much greater part of poor weak human kind.
Freedom, once grown licentious, to the worst evil tends,
And in certain ruin, or anarchy ends,

Those Atheists, who dare the Creator deny,
 All laws, howe'er just, will expose or decry :
 Religion, laws, morals, are the props of the state,
 The shield that protects it from each stroke of fate.
 Blest liberty all who have feeling adore,
 'Tis alone its excess, and abuse I deplore.

Tho' some patriots may think me at best a blind fool,
 A poor abject slave, or a pension'd Court-tool,
 I declare to all such, who may spread this report,
 I ne'er received favour from PITT, KING, or Court.
 My motive in writing these heart-felt effusions,
Est pour passer le tems, and warn men from delusions.
To all men by these presents, hereby be it known,
 Tho' a slave to no party, I wish ill to none,
 Convinc'd, if unbiass'd we look the world round,
 In each, men of honour and worth may be found ;
 And sincerely esteem those my country's true friends,
 Who serve it from principle, not sordid ends ;
 Whose faith, views, and interest, should still be the same ;
 Can such at just measures with malice exclaim ?
 For *public reform* who thus strongly contend,
 To that of themselves should with caution attend ;
 Nor for trivial faults at the rest cast a stone,
 Unless well assur'd they have none of their own.
 May good-will, peace, and concord in unity bind,
 All those who wish well to the rest of mankind !
 Fairly try'd, Christianity will ever be found,
 The criterion of Ethicks, Philosophy's ground ;

The simple plain rules gospel truths all contain,
More clearly man's *natural just rights* will explain,
Than any vain boasted Utopian wild schemes,
With which your new-fangl'd *Philosophy* teems.
If credulous bigotry disturb'd days of yore,
Infidelity has tenfold the mischief in store.

Should this amuse, I have in store,
Of different kinds, full half a score,
On various subjects, in various measure,
Just as may suit your whim and pleasure,
All highly season'd with Cayenne,
A spice admir'd by nine in ten ;
For when digestion proves too weak,
A *stimulus* we're forc'd to seek ;
Whil'st he whose appetite is good,
Prefers more simple wholesome food.
Each poet, to escape just blame,
Shou'd have some useful virtuous aim.





